

HOUSE RESOLUTION 16

By Lundberg

A RESOLUTION to commend Reverend Joseph William Byrd for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those individuals who have answered a divine call to the ministry and who have served with dedication, vigor, and enthusiasm to perform God's work for their congregations and their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Joseph William Byrd is one such stalwart servant of the Lord who has rendered sixty years of faithful, selfless, and effective pastoral leadership to Bloomingdale Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, born in North Carolina on August 3, 1923, Joe Byrd is the eldest of seven children born to Gussie Catherine Frazier and the late Reverend Allie R. Byrd, Sr., a renowned Baptist Evangelist; and

WHEREAS, an avid learner and diligent student, Reverend Byrd attended West View Elementary, Sullivan High School, Carson-Newman Preachers' School, and the Extension Seminary Department of the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, on September 12, 1942, he married the love of his life, Eileen Barker Byrd, and the loving couple have cherished sixty-seven years of marital bliss together; their praise worthy union has produced four wonderful children, six treasured grandchildren, and eleven precious great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, a member of the Greatest Generation, Joe Byrd served valiantly in England, Wales, France, and Germany as a Reconnaissance Sergeant for the United States Army during World War II; he rendered sterling service in three major battles, including the Battle of the

Bulge, and remains active in veterans affairs today, serving as the Chaplain of the American Legion Hammond Post No.3 and a lifetime member of both the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV); and

WHEREAS, since being ordained by the West View Park Baptist Church of Kingsport on April 1, 1951, Reverend Byrd has served with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Byrd has tirelessly contributed his time and tremendous talents as the pastor of Bloomingdale Baptist Church since July 25, 1952, when he became that congregation's first full-time pastor; and

WHEREAS, for more than half a century, Joe Byrd has worked assiduously to provide hope and communicate God's love to his congregants and community, conducting over 4,000 funerals, performing over 1,000 weddings, baptizing almost 1,000 members, and preaching over 6,000 sermons; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career as a religious leader and humble servant of God, Reverend Byrd has demonstrated the utmost ability and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his friends, his family, and the many members of his congregation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the ministry of Reverend Joseph William Byrd, commend him for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee, salute his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living his life with courage and conviction, and wish him every continued success in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.